

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5041

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CPRS, FR

SUBJECT: PRESS SERVICE COVERAGE OF FIVE HIJACKERS

REF: PARIS 29169

1. ON NOVEMBER 8, 1975 WIRE SERVICES IN PARIS CARRIED ITEMS REFERRING TO A U.S. REQUEST FOR PROVISIONAL ARREST OF FIVE UNIDENTIFIED HIJACKERS. NEWS LEAK APPARENTLY CAME FROM FRENCH SOURCE. ACTION OFFICERS OF FRENCH MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JUSTICE AND INTERIOR ARE ALL AWARE OF CASE AND FRENCH AIRPORTS AND BORDER POSTS HAVE BEEN REQUESTED TO BE ON ALERT FOR FIVE PERSONS WANTED. THUS LEAK COULD HAVE COME FROM ANY OF A NUMBER OF SOURCES.

2. FIRST COVERAGE, WHICH WAS VERY CONFUSED, APPEARED AS NEWS FLASH ON FRENCH RADIO AND TELEVISION. STORY REFERRED TO HIJACKING OF AMERICAN MILITARY PLANE BY FIVE AMERICAN BLACKS WHO MIGHT OVERFLY FRENCH AIRSPACE OR WHO MIGHT TRY TO LAND IN FRANCE. THESE STORIES WERE LATER DENIED.

3. EMBASSY PROVIDES BELOW TRANSLATION OF NOTEWORTHY ITEMS CARRIED BY ASSOCIATED PRESS AND AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WHICH HAVE NOT, AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, BEEN CARRIED IN NEWSPAPERS:

A. FOLLOWING IS TRANSLATION OF PRESS ITEM CARRIED BY ASSOCIATED PRESS LATE AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 7:
"A MISUNDERSTANDING CONCERNING AN AMERICAN REQUEST FOR
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THE ARREST OF FIVE PERSONS CAUSED AN ALERT ON SATURDAY

AT ALL FRENCH AIRPORTS. THE AIRPORT POLICE HAD BEEN NOTIFIED THAT AN HIJACKED AMERICAN MILITARY PLANE MIGHT LAND ON FRENCH SOIL. AFTER VERIFICATION, IT APPEARS THAT THE REQUEST CONCERNED ONLY THE ARREST OF FOUR MEN AND A WOMAN WHO MIGHT ARRIVE IN FRANCE PROBABLY ON A COMMERCIAL FLIGHT".

B. FOLLOWING IS TRANSLATION OF MORE COMPLETE PRESS ITEM CARRIED BY AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE ALSO LATE AFTER-NOON NOVEMBER 7: "A TELEGRAM FROM INTERPOL TRANSMITTED TO FRENCH AUTHORITIES LATE SATURDAY AFTERNOON INDICATES THAT FOUR MEN AND ONE WOMAN OF BLACK RACE WHO ARE THE OBJECT OF AN INTERNATIONAL ARREST WARRANT FOR HIJACKING AN AIRPLANE IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1972 MAY TRY TO RETURN TO ALGERIA VIA FRANCE. AMERICAN AUTHORITIES HAVE REQUESTED THAT FRENCH AUTHORITIES ARREST THE FIVE PERSONS IN THE EVENT THAT THEY ENTER FRENCH TERRITORY. THE DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL ARREST WARRANTS HAS THUS RESULTED IN A TELEGRAM FROM THE AIR AND BORDER POLICE NOT ONLY TO ALL AIRPORTS BUT ALSO TO LAND AND SEA BORDER POSTS. FROM GOOD SOURCE IT IS LEARNED THAT AMERICAN AUTHORITIES HAD ALREADY DISTRIBUTED AN INTERNATIONAL WARRANT FOR THESE FIVE PERSONS AUGUST 8, 1972".

4. IF QUERIED BY PRESS EMBASSY PLANS LIMIT REPLY TO STATEMENT TO EFFECT WE HAVE REQUESTED PROVISIONAL ARREST IF AND WHEN HIJACKERS SHOW UP.
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